

I ****STRONGLY**** object to the proposed "broadcast flag" which is a counterproductive attempt by broadcasters to increase their control over how people watch television. I believe in the concept of Fair Use, in which a person is allowed to copy a program for their own use, such as to view it at a different time than it was originally aired. If new digital TVs and VCRs are hobbled by this proposed feature, the adoption of digital TV will be slowed, since people will resist this loss of functionality. Also, note that anyone that manages to build a receiver that ignores the broadcast flag can make the content available for free (yes, sure, this will be illegal, but good luck catching the person, and even if the content owner catches the person, the damage has been done), so it's unclear what problem this mandate is actually solving.

Surely TV manufacturers would rather sell more TVs than have the market artificially constrained by senseless regulation. TVs or VCRs that support this feature will be less attractive to buyers, and will probably be more expensive to boot. The public will never accept digital television if their accustomed user experience from analog TV is not preserved. When Joe Sixpack finds out he can't tape Monday Night Football on his new digital VCR, I imagine he'll be returning it on Tuesday. Most people are not aware of these issues now -- which is probably why the people interested in these rules changes are acting now -- so it is important not to make such rules yet. The FCC is simultaneously pushing digital TV ****hard****, and yet setting up the whole enterprise for failure by undermining the desirability of digital TVs and VCRs.

Please DO NOT create regulations mandating the "broadcast flag" or any derivative or related concept. You ultimately have a duty to the public to act in our interest.